A SERMON PREACHED AT THE ASSIZES HELD IN WARWICK.

Auguſt the First, 1681.

By *John Inett* M. A. late of *Univerſity* College in *Oxon.* now Vicar of *Nun-Eaton* in *Warwick-ſhire.*

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XUM

TO

John Chamberlain Esq;

High Sheriff of the County of

WARWICK.

AND TO

Sir *Charles Holt*,
Sir *John Knightlow*,
Sir *John Bridgman*,
Sir *Charles Leigh*,
Sir *Andrew Hackett*,
Sir *William Underhill*,
Sir *Arthur Caley*.

And the rest of the Gentlemen of the Grand Jury at the last Assizes.

Gentlemen,

HAd not your Commands prevailed over my inclinations, the ensuing Discourse had never been more publick than from the Pulpit; but deeming it ill manners to dispute the justice or expedience of your Commands, and Obedience better than Sacrifice, I resigne to the Sentence you have passed; nor will I offer at an Apology for that which has your Commands to publish, to vouch your approbation, nor so much distrust your goodness as to doubt of pardon for this Address, to implore your Patronage and Protection of a discourse of Righteousness, which by your Authority is made publick, and by your Example may be made useful; whom God has placed on high, on

purpoſe to give meaſures to the Piety, and Loyalty of your Countrey; and from whom all inferiours muſt learn to diſtinguiſh Zeal from Faction, Religion from Grimace, and ſteady from pretended Loyalty: And that Countrey is happieſt where the vertue, and conſequently the reputation and the intereſt of the Gentry are greateſt: But where Vice that great Leveller undermines their intereſt, and the Populace ſupplants them in their power, the miſchief is like the wounds of Conſcience, inſupportable, and with the wiſe man we may ſay, who can bear it? *I have no more to add but my prayers to Almighty God, that from your Examples, your Countrey may learn to* fear God and honour the King; *that* Your light may ſo ſhine *before the common people,* That they ſeeing your good works, may glorifie your Father which is in Heaven; *that you may be Examples of Piety and Loyalty to ſucceeding Ages; that you may Eternize the honour of our Countrey, and your names be had in everlaſting remembrance: Which ſhall ever be the Prayer of*

Gentlemen,

Your moſt Obedient and moſt Humble Servant,

John Inett.

Prov. XIV. *part of the* 34. Verſe.

Righteouſneſs exalteth a Nation, &c.

'TIS ſaid of the Ancient *Romans*, that they never began an action of any weight and moment till they firſt conſulted with their Gods; that they never ſate down to beſiege a City till they had firſt invited the tutelary Gods to forſake it: And fearing the prevalence of theſe their charmes, 'twas cuſtomary with the Nations againſt whom they fought, to offer a kind of violence to their Deities, chaining their Statues to ſecure their preſence and protection. The *Roman* thinking no valour enough to take a City not deſerted by the powers above: And the *Barbarian* no courage ſufficient to defend it when forſaken by them. Though theſe are deplorable Monuments of humane frailty, and ſhew us what wild extravaganeies we ſhould run into, had we not a more glorious light than that of Nature to be our Guide:

Yet withal it demonſtrates a reverence and veneration to Religion imprinted by the hand of Nature; that the common notices of Reaſon taught the Gentile World, that the glory of a People, the ſucceſs of Armies, and grandeur of Nations depend upon it: and can our thoughts be leſs honourable, our ſentiments leſs generous of that Religion which exacts the moſt ſtrict and regular juſtice, the moſt frank and univerſal charity; that commands our Brother ſhould ſtand as fair in our love as our neareſt intereſt; that derives its Being from the Eternal God, and by a ſeries of Miracles has been owned by the powers above? A Religion ſo highly conducive to the peace of Societies, the intereſt of Nations, and the common good of mankind, that if Life and Immortality were not brought to light through the Goſpel, there is enough to recommend it to the protection and care of Magiſtrates: which naturally tends to heal the diſ-orders of State, to make Subjects peaceable and obedient, Armies ſucceſsful, Princes Wiſe, Beloved and Glorious, and is that *Righteouſneſs which exalts a Nation.*

Nor is all this ſpeculation, or the fond Idea of

of a cloyſtered genius, nor Melancholy paradox of a thinking brain, but the reſult of experiment, and a Maxime received in the politicks of the wiſeſt King: 'Tis a dictate from the Throne of *Solomon*, and a foundation for the moſt happy Government laid down by a Prince that had the Spirit of Wiſdome for his Guide; 'tis he affirmes, That *Sin is a reproach to a People, and Righteouſneſs exalts a Nation.*

The ſtrength and weight of which aſſertion will be more clearly diſcerned if we firſt inquire into the ſeveral notions of Righteouſneſs.

Firſt, Righteouſneſs is ſometimes taken for that diſtributive juſtice, which conſiſts in the enacting and due execution of Laws, for a terror to evil doers, and a praiſe and encouragement of thoſe that doe well; and is ſo fixed to the authority of the Magiſtrate, that what is juſtice when it has the ſtamp of a power, may be a ſin when acted by an uncommiſſioned hand. Heaven has determined that he which imbrues his hands in anothers blood, ſhall atone for it with his own: But has not left it a common right of mankind to execute wrath upon thoſe that doe evil; but ſo annexed it to

the authority which bears the ſword, that the death of the ſame Criminal that is juſtice by the Magiſtrate may be murther by a private Perſon. And 'tis happy for us that the King of Kings has put his ſword into no other but his Vicegerents hand; that Power is not the ſtandard of Equity; that the greedy mind is not the judge of Right and Wrong; that *vengeance belongs unto the Lord*, and by himſelf, or by his Subſtitutes, he alone repayes. And this Righteouſneſs is to the body Politick what the blood is to the body Natural, the publick health and vigor are preſerved by a due circulation of it; if it be too hot and run too high, the body is in a Fever; if Phlegmatick and cold and run too ſlow, 'tis a Symptome of languiſhing and conſumption; but then the body is ſound, when Righteouſneſs and Mercy go hand in hand, when they kindly mix together, and truth looks down from Heaven.

Secondly, But as Righteouſneſs is taken for that juſtice which reſpects the Magiſtrate, and is ſtyled diſtributive, ſo it is taken for the ſecond ſpecies of juſtice, which reſpects all men in their converſation and dealings one with another, and is by the Schools termed commutative,

commutative. How much it is the duty of all men eſpecially of all Chriſtians *to do juſtly*: How far Trade and Commerce, and conſequently the ſtrength and glory of Nations do depend upon the juſtice of her Subjects; are things ſo obvious that I preſume it needleſs to inſiſt upon them, and ſhall paſs to the third notion of Righteouſneſs, and thus:

Thirdly, Righteouſneſs is taken for that Piety that Heaven does juſtly challenge from us, and is but another word for Religion, and in the ſenſe of our Saviour, Chriſtianity is nothing elſe but that Righteouſneſs which does exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees. Now becauſe to be thus righteous is a duty incumbent on us all, and this notion of Righteouſneſs comprehends both the other, I ſhall conſider it in this comprehenſive ſenſe, and in order unto that betake my ſelf to the clearing of this Propoſition which the words of my Text very naturally offer.

1. *Prop.* That Religion tends to promote the intereſt and honour of Nations, and the peace and welfare of mankind.

'Twould not become this place to attempt a ſurvey of the maxims of *Machaivell*, to offer at an eſſay to expoſe Cardinal *Palivicini*'s carnal

carnal policy, or ſhew the impracticableneſs of *Utopias* Laws, nor worth time to attack the foundation of Mr. *Hobbs* his Book *de Cive*; becauſe the greateſt votaries to Politicks, that ſacrifice Heaven to intereſt, and make Conſcience truckle to Reaſon of State, yet do not pretend to the Conduct of Nations without recommending a ſhew of Vertue, and at leaſt the Garb and Grimace of Religion. 'Tis enough therefore, if without attempting, to ſhew the weakneſs of theſe frames of policy, it be made appear that Religion promotes the intereſt and honour of all Societies, by ſhewing, firſt, what it is that diſturbs the felicity and peace of mankind, and from what cauſes the ruine and ſubverſion of Nations are derived: And, ſecondly, the tendency of Religion to promote the welfare of mankind, the peace, the intereſt, and the honour of Nations.

Firſt, Let us inquire what it is that ſubverts Government, and undermines the peace and welfare of States and Kingdoms. 'Twas Sin that invaded the joys of Paradiſe, and firſt introduced miſery into the world; 'twas that which once did curſe, which once did drown, and ſhall at laſt in flames conſume it.

And

And 'tis her fruitful womb that diffuſes miſery throughout the Univerſe, nor need we look further to find the original of theſe infelicities which diſturb the tranquility and peace of mankind; but trace them home, and without the wiſdom of *Solomon* we ſhall find the true Mother of the Child; their lines and features are ſo much alike, that the ſuffering very naturally carries us to a proſpect of the ſin that brings it. Thus that the puniſhment might bear reſemblance with the ſin, the earth divides to puniſh the Schiſm of *Dathan* and *Abiram*; and they periſhed by fire, that with unhallowed hands ſnatched fire from the Altar. *Sodomes* unnatural flames bring new from Heaven to conſume it. The ſword puniſhed the cruelty of *Benjamin*; and *Achan*'s Sin purſues him through all the Tribes, and at laſt ſeizes on the Criminal. If *David*'s ambition carry him on to number the people, judgment ſtrikes directly at his darling ſin, and cures his pride by leſſening the number he prided in. Follow *Iſrael* down to *Egypt*, and their entertainment there carries us back to their inhumanity in ſelling *Joſeph* thither. View them in *Babylon* under the yoak of their new Lords

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the *Aſſyrians*, the place minds us of the Idolatry they learnt from thence, and their captivity points at their defection from their lawfull Sovereign: And ſo legible are our ſins in the miſeries that attend us here below, that he that runs may read. But to paſs by the conſequences of ſin ſo fatal unto Nations, becauſe it may be pretended that theſe are but the Accidental and not its Genuine and true born iſſue; let us inquire if Sin may not ruine a Nation, though the Divine juſtice ſtand neuter, and Judgment does not purſue it.

And here though God ſhould withhold his hand, we ſhall find Nations may be ruined by the ſins thereof. Examine the miſchief of Injuſtice, behold the black train of Avarice, the Trophies of Diſcontent, the direful conſequences of Diviſion; and what a flood of miſery! what a deluge of ſorrow does attend them! View the ſacrifices to Ambition, tell the number of Victims to that peeviſh ſin: How does that, like the *Druids* Deity, gorge it ſelf with blood! And how many lives do every year fall Sacrifices to the Ambition of Princes! And how uneaſie is it to its native ſoyl, and to all the neighbouring Kingdoms,

doms when it ſeizes upon a Throne! How ingrateful are the cryes of the Orphan and the Widow, where there is *oppreſſion in a Province*! How meagre is the countenance, and how Ghaſtly the looks of the poor, when his face is ground by the injuſtice of the rich! See the conſequences of diſcontent, when moſt retired it makes at leaſt one man miſerable, but how often does it invade the peace of Kingdoms, imbroyle Nations, and give Being to all the diſorders that may entitle Kingdoms wretched and unhappy! Such too are the iſſues of Diviſion, to which we owe the Tragick ſtories of inteſtine Wars. Let us compute the Maſſacres, ſumm up the Battels, and lay together the fatal Periods and Revolutions of Men and Kingdoms derived from no other cauſe, and 'twill be needleſs to draw together other Arguments to prove Sin the Author of humane miſery, *the reproach of a People*, the ruine of Kingdoms, and the bane of Nations. And if it be Sin which ruines, by the rule of contraries we are taught to conclude with *Solomon*, that *Righteouſneſs exalts a Nation*; which will yet be more clear from the ſecond thing to be inquired into, *viz.*

Secondly, The tendency of Religion to promote the intereſt and honour of Nations and the peace and welfare of mankind. All Societies are made up of individuals, and each man is capable of a twofold happineſs, Perſonal and Political; the one as man, the other as a member of a body Politick, and that is moſt properly accounted ſubſervient to the publick weale, which contributes to the felicity of mankind in this twofold eſtate. I ſhall therefore firſt inquire how.

Firſt, Righteouſneſs tends to the common good of Nations, by contributing to the happineſs of each particular perſon, of which they are conſtituted and do conſiſt.

'Tis eſſential to humane nature to contend for happineſs, that the higheſt degree of that we are capable of here below, is the reſult of Vertue and Piety, is ſo notorious that the confeſſions of its enemies is enough to ſuperſede all further arguments. Ask the man who feels the ſting of a guilty conſcience, that knows what it is to carry a Tormentor in his own boſom, to be always harraſſed with the frightful appendages of his own Vice; and hee'l ſoon reſolve us who's the happy man. Nay, take the jolly ſinner that not only bid defiance

defiance to Almighty God, but to the infirmities that attend upon other men, take him when his Pallate is cloyed, and his pleasures palled, when he has compared a Surfeit and a Debauch together, and hee'l readily award for Temperance. But if he carry on the Frollick, and resolutely for a time maintain a Paradox, but follow him to the place where he is to take his leave of the World, and so can have no temptation to belye his by-past minutes, there he retracts his erring Sentiments, and with his last breath proclaimes the good, the happy man; whose pleasures are the joys of Temperance, and a holy Conscience, who hears not the Orphans cryes sound his injustice in his ears, and feels not the smart of a wilful unrepented folly. And if the joys of good men were legible in their faces, and with the eyes of sense we could but see the serenity, peace, and complacency which hovers over vertuous actions; or view the holy man surrounded by the soft and gentle whispers of the blessed Spirit, proclaiming Jubilee to his Soul; or could the world be privy to the kind embraces of a holy conscience preaching peace to the righteous, and gladness to the true of heart; the most ob-

durate would retract, and it would be the common Contention, who ſhould be the moſt profitable ſervant to the Almighty, the moſt uſeful Votary to Religion, and ſtand the faireſt Candidate for Heaven. Beſides all this, thoſe ſatisfactions which are the objects of ſenſe, and ſtand high in the eulogies of vicious, as well as good men, are the Children of Religion; to that we owe our ſecurity from Violence, Rapine and Oppreſſion; to that rejoycing under our own Vine, and reſting undiſturbed under a Fig-tree of our own. *Naboth* enjoyes his Vineyard, *Uriah* his Beloved, the Prince maintains his Right, and the Subject is eaſie and undiſturbed in his Lawful Property, when Religion is the common Guardian; for our Secular intereſt, our Temporal peace, and all the bleſſings which indear this preſent life are but feuditaries to it. Wouldſt thou have thy honour unſtained, thy perſon ſafe, and thy right uninvaded, when Righteouſneſs rules the Sceptre there needs no Guard but Innocence. And what is thus rivited to the private intereſt of Prince and Subject, can have no other but an auſpicious influence upon Kingdoms, and cannot be of meaner uſe than to exalt a Nation:

To

To which it tends a ſecond way, and that is,

Secondly, By acquiring it an honourable eſteem among other Nations. He that will examine the unanimous ſenſe of Hiſtory, and the common ſentiments of men, ſhall ſtill find a due veneration to the powers Divine, and exact and regular juſtice ſet firſt in the Characters of an honourable and happy people. When theſe flouriſh, not a Poet but calls it the Golden Age; and all Hiſtorians however looſe themſelves, yet are loud in the applauſe of Juſtice, and are at pains in their annals to perpetuate its Fame, and make the remembrance of it live for ever.

This was the Baſis of the *Roman* greatneſs, and the reputation of their Generoſity, and Religion gained them more Conqueſts than their Valour and their Arms: whilſt their courage vanquiſhed Cities, their Religion carried its Conqueſts to the very hearts, and overcame the men. And that Prince is ever greateſt whoſe Dominion is in the hearts of his Subjects. But then did their Eagles begin to droop, their ſucceſs to flagg, when *Numa*'s ſpirit of Religion was loſt, and their Ancient juſtice and integrity began to faile; 'twas the *Punick* Faith that fruſtrated their Valour,

Valour, and their want of Religion that ſtopped the progreſs of their Arms. When the juſtice and fidelity of a Nation are rightly blemiſhed, upon which all Leagues and Contracts, all Trade and Commerce do depend, the credit is loſt, 'tis abandoned by all other Nations, left to confederate with its own vices, and combate with the anger of Heaven, and the common contempt and ſcorn of men. For no Nation can be great in the reputation of others, where there is not juſtice and fidelity to recommend it to their Friendſhip and Alliance, and where theſe are wanting, All the world looks upon ſuch a Nation as God Almighty taught the *Iſraelites* to do upon *Egypt*, as a Reed that may break or fail, may pierce or wound, but is unfit to ſupport the truſt of another Kingdom. But reputation and honour are the ſhadows of Righteouſneſs, and do as certainly and as naturally attend upon it as the ſhadow does upon the ſubſtance, or the rayes, thoſe Children of the Sun, upon the Father of lights. And let the Champions of Atheiſm produce a ſingle inſtance of any Nation that truly honoured God, that was not great in the eſtimation and love of men. Beſides giving it an honourable place

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in the eſteem of Forreigners, there is a Third way that *Righteouſneſs exalts a Nation*; And this is,

Thirdly, By reccommending the Government to the love of all its Subjects, and making it their intereſt to promote its peace and welfare. When the Religion of a Nation is ingaged for the ſecurity of every individual; and the publick juſtice makes the Tradeſman's ſhop as ſecure as if it were a Fort impregnable; when it eaſes the cares of the laborious Husbandman, and is a Guard to the Farmers Folds, his Barns, his Flocks, his Herds, and Fields; and gives liberty to every Subject to rejoyce in the fruits of his own labour, every man has a ſhare in the proſperity and peace of the publick, and is bound by his intereſt to promote them; and his private being incorporated with the publick welfare, he muſt recede from his own advantage, and renounce his private intereſt before he acts the Traitor to the publick. I cannot ſay, that this ſhall make Fools or Madmen wiſe; that it ſhall heal the diſcontents, or eat out the proud fleſh of a Nation; that it ſhall make the Sons of *Belial* good Subjects; that it ſhall work upon thoſe whoſe very mercies are cruel,

cruel, whoſe Principles make them Traitors, and whoſe Religion is propagated by blood; that it ſhall ſweeten the nature of a diſcontented *Achitophel*, or reconcile thoſe to the Government, that think well of none but which is managed by themſelves; that it ſhall take off *Abſolom* from making his Court to the rabble, and make him dutiful when the hopes of a Kingdom bids him diſobey: But with modeſty and reaſon it may be affirmed that where the Divine juſtice is made a pattern for the humane; where laws are juſt and good, and theſe laws the rule of publick juſtice: each Subject ſtands bound by his particular intereſt to promote the peace and welfare, and ſo far as in him lyes exalt the honour of the Nation. Beſides theſe, there is yet a fourth way, *viz.*

Fourthly, By preventing the judgments that ſin brings to ruine, and ingaging Providence to defeat the deſigns of ill men to undermine, a Nation. In the caſe of *Eli* God has taught us that *He will honour thoſe that honour him, and thoſe that deſpiſe him ſhall be lightly eſteemed.* 1 Sam. 2. 30.

This is a common Rule to Providence in his dealings with mankind, and although in the

the judgments of God, many things are unaccountable *and paſt finding out*; yet generally his revealed is a rule to his ſecret Will, and he ſcourges thoſe that by their ſins riſe in Rebellion againſt him, and is their Saviour and Deliverer that fight his battels againſt their ſins and follies; and no better reaſon can be aſſigned for the periods of Families, ſubverſion of Nations, and thoſe mighty Revolutions in the World, which ſwell ſo many volums of Hiſtory. He that will conſider by what ways Empire and Dominion have circled from one Kingdom to another, but look into the Origin of the *Aſſyrian*, *Perſian*, *Grecian* and *Roman* greatneſs, from what mean beginnings, and by what ſteps they grew up into the great Monarchies of the World: And again, how unaccountably they mouldred, ſunk under their own weight, and fell back again to their mean Originals; and how Proſperity and Grandeur wander from one Nation to another People, muſt needs be ſenſible by whom it is that Kingdoms Triumph and Nations proſper, who it is that *pulls down one, and ſets up another*; nor need we run further than the common obſervation of Hiſtorians, of the growth and decay of Nations;

or that account of it which God himſelf has delivered to the World, to be reſolved that 'tis ſin makes the Rod to ſcourge the people, and Righteouſneſs is the moſt prevailing motive with the Almighty goodneſs to defend them; nor do the Scriptures render any other account of the Halcion days or various Scenes of miſery in the *Jewiſh* Nation. But to examine all the inſtances to this purpoſe, laid down in Holy Writ, or amaſs together the examples in profane ſtory, would require a Volume rather than a Sermon; and as the Apoſtle ſaith in another caſe, may be ſaid in this, *Time would fail me to tell them.*

'Tis enough that every happy Government is built on juſtice; that Righteouſneſs is Guardian to the eſtate and honour of the great, the Champion of the poor, and the Advocate of the Fatherleſs and Widow; that it cements and preſerves the bonds of peace and love; that it confines Prerogative and Privilege to their proper Chanels; that our Names, our Perſons and our Beds are defended by it, and is the beſt ſecurity and defence to Prince and People. Certainly then, that which cuts off thoſe Sins, which make the Almighty Proclaim War with a Nation; that

that which tends to the Tranquility and Peace of every Soul; that which indears the Government to every Subject; that which makes the World court the Friendſhip and Alliance of a People; that which recommends a Nation to the protection and care of Providence; of ſuch a Righteouſneſs we may well ſay, that it ſerves the intereſt, exalts the honour of a Nation, and tends to promote the peace and welfare of mankind: Which is the aſſertion at firſt laid down, and being now proved, theſe Two practical Concluſions naturally follow.

1. *Pract. Concluſ.* That he is an enemy to his own peace and ſecurity, and the publick welfare, that neglects the holy offices of Religion. For if all ſhould purſue the examples of thoſe that are already Atheiſtical and Profane, and Religion periſh in the common Deluge of profaneneſs; this would put an end to the old diſtinction of, Mine and Thine; Right would be but an empty and inſignificant word; and the claimes of Allegiance and Property by Prince and People ſink to nothing. This would revive *Lillburns* name in a new race of Levellers; and it would certainly be one of the firſt effects of a general profaneneſs, to parcel out their eſtates and level their

perſons, with the common Crowd, that now by the greatneſs of their examples give countenance to the contempt of Religion, by which their perſons are ſecured, and their eſtates are guarded; and that reply once made to a Perſon of Honour, rallying at Religion, That if there were no ſuch thing, it would be no ſin to ſtabb his Grace, as his Father had been ſtabbed by another hand, teaches us how much each mans ſecurity does depend upon Religion, how much 'tis each mans private, as well as the publick intereſt to promote it; and conſequently how much he's an enemy to his own peace and ſecurity, as well as the publick good, that is not a friend to Religion: And from hence ariſes a ſecond practical Concluſion.

2. *Concluſ.* That they are the beſt Patriots that are moſt Solicitous to doe good; and by their practice and examples, encourage righteouſneſs in a Nation. This is the way to make a Kingdom flouriſh, to eſtabliſh it a renown great and laſting; to make it amiable to its Subjects, admired by its friends, feared by its enemies, and proſperous under the conduct and care of Providence, and with the *Pſalmiſt* may we ſay *happy are the people*

people that are in ſuch a caſe, yea bleſſed are the people who have the Lord for their God. Now that we may be this happy people, and ours that Nation which Righteouſneſs does exalt, let us reflect upon the whole in order to our practice; and becauſe God and our Country command every one of us to doe our parts in our ſeveral ſtations, I ſhall conclude with a particular Application of this general diſcourſe to our ſelves.

'Tis not the buſineſs I am call'd hither for to read Lectures of Juſtice to you (my Lords) whoſe great experience, wiſdom and knowledge in our Laws, make you perfectly acquainted with the true and proper meaſures of it. But there needs no Apology to Chriſtian Magiſtrates, for the Goſpel meek and humble Method of Addreſs, if as an Ambaſſadour of Chriſt I preſume to beſeech *Your Lordſhips* to maintain the glory of that God, by whom the higher powers are ordained; the dignity of that Sacred Perſon you repreſent, and the honour of the places which you fill; to perſevere in that integrity which has made the *Engliſh* Bench ſo glorious, and in your wiſe diſtribution of juſtice to fill up all the meaſures of men, *That fear God, hate Covetouſneſs*

vetouſneſs, and honour the King. May you imitate that God you adore, in pleading the cauſe of the Fatherleſs and the Widow, and righting thoſe whoſe innocence and neceſſities recommend them to your care; may your *juſtice run down in ſuch mighty ſtreams*, as may at once bear down the reigning ſins of the Nation, and the malice of your enemies together; may your Righteouſneſs make the Scarlet too great for envy, and ſtop the mouths of thoſe that blaſpheme God and the King, and watch for your halting; may every Sentence from your mouths, every ſtroke from your hands, ſo intirely quadrate with our Laws, which are juſt and good, that diſcontent may it ſelf not blaſt your actions, nor dare to call them by the hated name of Arbitrary: May your Righteouſneſs be a terror unto Vice, an incouragement to Vertue; may it bring glory to God, reputation to your ſelves, and exalt the honour of our Nation.

But now leſt any think juſtice the duty of Magiſtrates alone, and no Righteouſneſs but that of Governours requiſite to exalt a Nation: I muſt inlarge to ſhew the duties our Religion, and our Countrey challenge from every

every true *Engliſh* man, and every Orthodox Proteſtant.

Who is not ſenſible of that cloud which hangs over our heads, and is ready to diſſolve in ſhowres of vengeance? How the Conclave contrives, and what active emiſſaries it imploys to ruine and undo us? How our home bred quarrels lay us open to their malice, and prepare a way to the *Romans* to take our place and our Nation from us; and how much danger we are in, of their entrance at that gap which we have opened by our own diviſions: This is that we are all ſenſible of, and the cry of the Kingdom is that of the diſciples in the ſtorm, *we periſh, we periſh*; and yet whilſt with them we own, nothing but the Lord can ſave us, whoſe Piety ſtands in the Gap, whoſe Repentance invites the Salvation of our God? But on the contrary, whilſt we behold Church and State ready to be ſacrificed, how generally do we forget that iniquity is the ruine of a people, and make no other uſe of our danger, but maliciouſly to reflect on the conduct of our Governours? Thus, *Iſaac* like, we carry the fewel though marked out our ſelves to be the ſacrifice, and by a conjunction of ſin and folly, prepare a Funeral

ral pile for our ſelves, the beſt Religion, and the moſt excellent frame of Government.

We, like *David*, are in a ſtrait, ſeem to have nothing but choice of Plagues laid before us; either to give up our Necks to the *Roman* Yoak, which our Fathers were not able to bear; or elſe let the Kirk bore our ears to mark us for her ſlaves, and with a ſolemn League faſten us to the ſtool of Repentance: and our ſins have brought us to ſuch a paſs, that there ſeems a fatal neceſſity of the one, or other, or elſe to be ground betwixt them both. *Though all this be come upon us*, we may add with the Prophet, *who lays it to heart!* Good God! what ſhall we then doe, or whither ſhall we fly! will thy goodneſs deliver, which we have ſo much abuſed! or thy hand ſave, that is juſtly ſtretched forth to puniſh us! is not vengeance thine, and wilt not thou repay! can our ſins, that are before thy Throne to cry for vengeance, come down unanſwered! or our horrid impieties eſcape thy hand! wilt not thou viſit us for our ſins, *and will not thy Soul be avenged upon ſuch a people as this:* That uſe thy forbearance, thy mercies and deliverances, to encourage and heighten our ſins, and perpetuate our Rebellion againſt thee;

thee; that deſpiſe dominion, and ſpeak evil of dignities; that uſe the clemency of a Prince to libel and reproach him, and fly in the face of Government; plenty to fat themſelves for the day of ſlaughter; and peace but to gain time to prepare for war, and make the ſword ſharper for the day of battel. Is this the way to make a Kingdom flouriſh, to invite Forreigners to ſay we are *a wiſe and underſtanding people*, or buoy up the ſinking Credit of our Countrey? Is this the way to invite the Papiſt to forſake his errours, to bring him to the embraces of the Proteſtant faith, and confeſs there is no Religion that *has Statutes and Judgments ſo righteous* as ours? And is this the Righteouſneſs that will exalt our Nation? No! 'tis theſe impieties that are a reproach to the name of Proteſtant! 'tis theſe provoke the *Gallick* cruelty to attempt to root out that Name from under Heaven; and the affronts we daily ſee put upon our Government, certainly help to kindle the rage of *France* againſt our Brethren there. 'Tis theſe are a ſhame to the truth we own, a diſhonour to our God and our Countrey, and unleſs repented of, will certainly be the ruine of our Souls, our Religion and our Nation.

What made *Iſrael* captive in *Babylon*, what gave them up to the Conqueſt of *Pompey*, and to a final deciſion by the hand of *Titus*? what brought that miſerable bondage the poor Chriſtians of the Eaſt labour under, and ſubmitted thoſe once flouriſhing Churches to the *Turkiſh* power? If it were their ſins, we have as ſtrong grounds to believe it juſt with God to take away his Goſpel from us, to permit Superſtition to invade, and Idolatry once more to overrun us; and as often as we contemplate how fatal ſins have been to other people, and with an impartial eye look upon our own, we muſt with our Saviour cry out, that *except we repent, we ſhall all likewiſe periſh.*

I muſt therefore beſeech you, Brethren, by all that's Sacred, by all that's dear to wiſe and good men, for your Souls, your Religion, and your Countries ſake, that *your light may ſhine before men*, that with good works, and holy lives you may adorn the Proteſtant faith and name, that you forſake your ſins, and turn unto the Lord your God; 'tis this muſt ſtop the wrath which is gone out againſt us, ſtay the hand of the deſtroying Angel, and prevail with God, that neither our Religion, our King, nor our ſelves may periſh. Let us there-

fore ſet our ſelves to live up to that Religion which God has planted, and by a ſeries of miracles has preſerved amongſt us. Let us confute the Papiſt by living better lives, manifeſt that we have a better Religion, by being better Chriſtians, and better Subjects. Let us *put on the Armour of God, and not only name the Name of Chriſt, but depart from all iniquity.* Thus God will fight againſt thoſe that fight againſt us, and our Religion will ſtand impregnable notwithſtanding all the deſigns of men. Let me therefore beſeech you, Brethren, in this day of tryal, when ruine impends, and judgment threatens; not to think (as the practice of too many is) to excuſe your neglect of Piety and Repentance by imputing all our dangers to the ill conduct of our Governours; do not think your love or zeal to your Religion, or your Country conſiſts in reviling of authority, or ſpeaking evil of the Rulers of the people; but let us look at home, correct the ſins that lodge within our own walls, ſtrive whoſe life ſhall be the greateſt ornament to our Religion, who ſhall be firſt in the way to Heaven, and who fitteſt for the Crown of Glory and Immortality, and the ineffable felicities of the Saints in light; thus

thus at once you'l ſerve your God, your Religion, your Countrey, and your ſelves, and by the ſame methods promote the honour of the former, and the intereſt and felicity of the latter. Thus Heaven and Earth, your Preſent and your Eternal intereſt unite, to command your utmoſt induſtry, to make Righteouſneſs beloved, and practis'd, Vertue ſacred, and Religion obeyed and honoured. Thus ſhall we be the people in the happy caſe, *who have the Lord for our God.* Thus may we be happy here, and bleſſed hereafter. Thus that Righteouſneſs which makes this Kingdom and our Religion flouriſh, will make us *ſhine at laſt like Stars in Glory*, and that which exalts our Nation, will exalt us all at laſt to Heaven.

FINIS.